



EXHIBIT 1  
DATE 1/28/15  
HB 48

## MONTANA SECRETARY OF STATE

LINDA McCULLOCH

HB 48: Allow On-line Voter Registration  
House State Administration, RM 455  
January 28, 2015 @ 8 AM  
Secretary of State Linda McCulloch's Testimony

- Good morning Mr. Chair, members of the committee. For the record, I am Linda McCulloch, Montana Secretary of State.
- I am asking for your support of House Bill 48, which would allow Montana citizens who possess a valid Montana driver's license or Montana ID card to apply for voter registration electronically. Thank you Representative Custer for sponsoring this legislation.
- Unlike the current paper-based system, online voter registration eliminates the need for counties to manually enter voter registration information into the statewide voter registration system. Those registering to vote would still have the option to fill out a paper registration form.
- Implementing an online registration option would:
  - Save a considerable amount of time and money, while increasing the accuracy of Montana's voter lists. It would also eliminate incomplete or unreadable applications, as an individual would not be able to submit the application online until all the required fields are completed and it will allow our military voters, specifically those overseas to have year round access to the online registration process.
- Just about everywhere in Montana, and in the U.S., people are filing secure documents online. We pay our bills and taxes online, do our banking online, and file many of our important business and personal documents online. One thing we can't do electronically in Montana, is register to vote.
- Across the nation, government budgets are strained and an increasing number of states are tightening their belts by improving online access to various types of election information.
  - 24 states have already passed online voter registration, including western states Washington and Arizona. 7 states have implemented online registration systems within the past 2 years. Reports from the states that offer online registration show savings of millions of dollars over the years.

### *Here's how it would work:*

- First and foremost, this bill allows online voter registration to only those Montanans who possess a valid, Montana driver's license or ID card. When applying for a Montana driver's license or ID, the applicant must provide:

- Proof of identity - 2 documents required
  - Proof of Montana residency – a document that includes the applicant's name and MT residence address as it appears on the DL application – utility bill, piece of cancelled mail, etc.
  - Proof of authorized presence - certified birth certificate, valid passport, valid certificate of naturalization, tribal photo ID, etc. (May be one of the documents submitted as proof of identification.)
- After providing the proof required by MVD, and after being issued a MT driver's license or ID, the individual becomes eligible to register to vote online. It's as simple, secure and convenient as that!
  - I'd like for it to be clear that under current Montana law, a person does not have to appear in person, or show their ID, in order to register to vote. In fact, at least 39% of individuals register without ever appearing in person at the county election office.
  - To clarify, Montanans must provide a verifiable driver's license number or the last 4 digits of their social security number when registering, but do not have to show ID.
  - The online voter registration system would capture all the required information from the individual and capture the signature from the Motor Vehicle Division for a paperless transfer to the statewide voter registration system.
  - This paperless transfer would include the individual's affirmation that they meet the eligibility requirements to register to vote, and the electronic signature on file with the MVD.
  - Once they receive the electronic transfer, county election officials will use the current system to review and approve the application submitted online, and process the application just as they would a paper application.
  - The difference is that they wouldn't have to try to decipher illegible printing or enter any of the information into the statewide system by hand. It would be a streamlined process compared to the current paper-based system, and eliminate incomplete registrations and errors in the statewide system.
  - Montana's military and overseas citizen electors can now apply for a ballot, receive a precinct-specific ballot, vote their ballot and return their ballot online through the Electronic Absentee System, which was implemented in 2010.
  - Candidates have the ability to file their Declarations for Nomination and campaign finance information online. Many of you took advantage of this when filing for office last year.
  - Offering the ability to apply for voter registration online will increase transparency, accuracy and efficiency in the voter registration process.
  - Thank you for your time this morning.